

French Colonial Africa: A Guide to Official Sources

Gloria D. Westfall

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To my mother, Bernice T. Dunn, and to
the memory of my father, Lester S. Dunn.

Contents

PREFACE

The goal of the present volume is to improve access to the wealth of information on political, economic, social, and cultural conditions in the former French colonies in tropical Africa in official records. Because official publications on French colonies are complex and difficult to locate, they have been greatly under-utilized, particularly in comparison to the use of analogous publications for British colonial history. Up to the present moment, there have been only a few short articles or sections of books devoted to explaining them. I hope that the present volume will remove some of the barriers to their use and bring them within easy reach of researchers and the librarians who help them in their quest.

The book begins with a discussion of the basic reference tools on French tropical African colonies--overviews, research guides, and bibliographies. Since a knowledge of the people and institutions that created official documents is essential for understanding and using them, this chapter also contains sections on the organization of the French colonial administration and directories and biographies of officials.

Archival sources in France and Africa are the subject of the second chapter. Chapter III presents a detailed discussion of the main categories of official documents published in metropolitan France, while chapter IV examines the great colonial societies and the publications produced by them. A bibliography of official works published in the several colonies completes the volume.

Much to my regret, limitations of time, particularly in French libraries and archives, prevented my examining all the titles I have listed in this book. Where I was unable to view the work itself or a copy of its title page, I have placed an asterisk by the title.

I wish to thank David Gardinier of Marquette University and David Henige of the University of Wisconsin, Madison for their help. Both read large portions of the manuscript and offered very welcome advice and support. I am also grateful to Paula Meadows of Indiana University, who remained cheerful throughout the processing of the

Chapter V

1. French West Africa, **Journal officiel**, Dec. 13/14, 1912, p. 41.

2. **Ibid.**, Jan. 13/14, 1912, p. 40-41. Apparently the only edition of this title ever published was the 1910 edition held by Aix branch of the National Archives and the Bibliothèque Nationale.

3. Ivory Coast, **Journal officiel**, Sept., 1895, p. 2-3.

4. **Ibid.**, Sept. 15, 1897, p. 1-2.

5. **Ibid.**, Oct. 15, 1898, p. 1.

6. P. F. Gonidec, **Droit d'Outre-Mer**, Paris: Montchréstien, 1959, p. 454-6.

7. **Ibid.**, p. 153, 156.

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This index contains personal authors, corporate authors, subjects, and distinctive titles. Generic titles are generally omitted. Titles have been abbreviated in many cases because of space considerations. Translations of names of government agencies are unofficial.